



Massachusetts Teachers Association Environmental Health & Safety Committee

The MTA Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Committee supports, encourages, and acts as a resource for the MTA and its

affiliates in their efforts to promote healthy and safe environments for staff and students.

- We maintain an accessible central location of EH&S information in schools. In particular, we are putting together a comprehensive website which can be viewed at www.massteacher.org/inside/ehs.
- We advocate passage of legislation that seeks to protect children and staff from EH&S problems. We do this by mobilizing our members and working in coalition with various labor organizations, health and safety organizations, government agencies, and public health associations. We are members of the following:
 - ◆ **Massachusetts Coalition of Occupation Safety and Health**
MassCOSH brings together workers, unions, community groups, and health, safety and environmental activists to organize and advocate for safe, secure jobs and healthy communities. Through training, technical assistance and building community/labor alliances, MassCOSH mobilizes its members and develops leaders in the movement to end unsafe work conditions. The Healthy Schools Initiative of MassCOSH seeks to improve health and environmental conditions for students and school staff through advocacy, education and technical assistance. Through the Healthy Schools Hotline, MassCOSH also provides support, resources and referrals to members of the school community.
 - ◆ **The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT)**
The AHT is a coalition of citizens, scientists, health professionals, workers, and educators seeking preventive action on toxic hazards. The AHT's goal is to correct fundamental flaws in government policies that allow harm to our health and environment and to create proactive policies to prevent harm before the damage is done, and to choose the safest alternatives.
- We create and support MTA initiatives and efforts to educate members and staff about health and safety issues affecting school staff and students. A recent example is a note that went to presidents of local affiliates regarding mold in schools - an issue of particular importance given the humid spring and summer.
- We encourage the formation of local EH&S Committees. We like, and encourage the use of, the EPA's Tools for Schools' program. We also encourage MTA local affiliates to bargain for contract language that will promote healthy and safe environments.

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